

House Republican Press Release

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Ryan and Scribner Hail Passage of Safe Rides Bill



Carve Out of Graduated Licensing Law Allows Teens to Volunteer Again

HARTFORD- State Representative John Ryan (R-Darien) and Representative David Scribner (R-Brookfield, the Ranking Member of the Transportation Committee today hailed the passage by both the state House of Representatives and Senate of a measure that allows teen volunteers to drive for the Safe Rides program once again.

The Safe Rides program, often sponsored by the American Red Cross, the Boy Scouts of America or other public service programs, offers safe transportation home with no questions asked for teens who need a ride home when they otherwise should not get behind the wheel. Very often, teens volunteer for the program that operates well into the early hours of the morning.

When legislation introduced by Representative Scribner creating graduated licensing for teens was enacted into law, it prohibited a sixteen or seventeen-year olds with an operator's license from driving between midnight and 5:00 a.m. unless the person is driving for work or a school activity, or out of medical necessity. Exemptions were made for ambulance, fire and EMS personnel who are sixteen or seventeen years of age, but not for Safe Rides. As a result of the bill, the teen volunteers were no longer able to work the Safe Rides program during those hours.

"At the time graduated licensing was being considered last year, I was approached by Representative Ryan concerning the Safe Rides program," said Representative Scribner. "We were unable to make the change last year before passage, but I pledged to him that we would revisit the issue this session, and we have."

"Darien has had a tremendously successful Safe Rides program for years that has been staffed with very responsible teens," said Representative Ryan. "I am pleased that with Representative Scribner's assistance, we were able to make this change, and allow teens to return to volunteering for the Safe Rides program, which provides a critical service to young people in need."

The measure was attached as *Senate Schedule A* to *SB 328, An Act Concerning the Department of Motor Vehicles*. The bill will now head to Governor M. Jodi Rell for her signature.